

# The Houdini Issue

malkovich

ICU girls in you'd notice me... Maybe it all. That we benefit from super cute older students, visitors, and fun to be around at the bus. We started to talk, it's kinda punk looked sweater. We exchanged a fellow fire a bird. i'm more or is they say.

I AM A BUILDING  
MADE OUT OF  
SEAHORSES

There were  
SO MANY  
GOLDFISH.

Seriously.

nothing but—!! In wrestling, then, is a skin: I rub my language tropes of material culture. I the problem: why do I feel a lot of time accumulation?! I hope I am not saying warm.

Chapter 1:  
The beginning

Omen more like Nemo

Hey,

I was wondering when the next submission deadline was?

IF YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE HAMPSHIRE STUDENT UNION FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR YOU PROBABLY KNOW IT WAS DYSFUNCTIONAL FOR A LOT OF REASONS. LARGE ONE WAS SIMPLY THAT THERE WERE UNIFIED DOCUMENTS FROM WHICH TO

HELP ME OXOGONS.  
I AM A SILVER  
MOOSE. I WON'T GO ANYWHERE

WHERE'S WALDO? WALDO'S WHERE'S WALDO?

The  
omen

VOLUME 43 ISSUE

3

## Staff Box:

Grace Willey - Kurt Cobain

B Corfman - Grandpa's Cheese Barn

Jess Ide - Chad Kroger & Avril Lavigne Romantic Duet

Hamlet Cooper - Nickelback

Nora Miller - Shokazoba

Devin Morse - Some Guy With a Long Coat and a Ukelele

Siqi Lu - The Stones

Alex De Strulle - The Rainbow Unicorns

Yawen Xiong - 40 minutes of complete silence

Mika Holbrook - The Vampire Dads

Noelle Micarelli - The Weird Sisters

Nancy Michaud - Korn

Mekdes Cavallaro - Juicy J.

Gabriel ??? - Hannah Montana

Carloline - Nicki Minaj

Houdini The Cat - Josie & The Pussy Cats

Jackie The Dog - Bacon Bits

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to [omen@hampshire.edu](mailto:omen@hampshire.edu) or B Corfman, Box 1666.

## Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.



Front cover by Nora Miller

Back cover and Houdini photos submitted by Siqi Lu



# EDITORIAL

## Grace Willey | B Corfman

Hello Readers,

Let's talk about Halloween. It's coming up and before you know it those white tents will rise like possessed bodies from the soon to be dead library lawn.

I must be the only person on campus, at least out of the people I choose to interact with, who actually looks forward to our little school's annual orgy of vices and quick thrills. Albeit, I'm never the one to be partaking in the spirits or doing the "drug cigarettes" (or whatever you freaky kids call them these days)- I usually flit between bad B-Monster screenings and scaring high people with make up effects. Nonetheless there's something very intoxicating about the whole affair and I do have a soft spot for dancing.

I mean- who doesn't relish the moment when they enter the dance tent and feel the bass hum into their veins? Who doesn't anticipate mud between their toes and music in their hair? Who doesn't yearn for that moment when their body is pulled by some unknown forces into that mass of heaving, sweating, screaming, grinding revelers? Who doesn't ache for the pressure of the lights, the sounds, the sway of the crowd to make every molecule in their body vibrate into stars and every neuron in their brain to burst into fire in a moment of howling ecstatic release?

Anyway, I'm going as a magnificent Unseelie Queen this year- sort of to juxtapose the May Queen mask I made for a Thom Haxo class last semester.

I hope everyone thoroughly enjoys themselves this year and, if it is within your intentions, stays safe and stay spoopy.

-Grace Willey, Co-Interim Editrix, WJGAJLP (Waiting for Jonathan Gardener and J Lash's Pancakes)

\*\*\*In my heart of hearts I'm actually going as the Fairy Queen from the Tam Lin Ballad/Shara Worden in The Hazards of Love\*\*\*

Hey everyone,

How are your semesters going? We're getting past the midpoint and, as much as the Omen is about hate, it's about a sort of smug self-satisfied hate. And to fill our quotas of that kind of hate we need to make sure enough of you are doing okay.

For those of you who feel overwhelmed, take care of yourself first. Your editor failed half of their classes first year; I'm still here! And thriving, even.

Do something nice for yourself. The Omen commands it. The Omen loves you.

But anyway, I've been really into comics lately. Like, really. I started reading Young Avengers two and a half weeks ago and now here I am, way too attached to way too many characters and probably adding more. Has anyone decided who/what their halloween costumes are going to be? Because I'm going to be Kate Bishop.

If you don't know who she is - she's a kickass no-powers superhero with an absurd amount of martial arts/archery training, who joins up with the Young Avengers and eventually becomes Hawkeye. And she hangs out with Clint Barton and they have a beautiful friendship.

Anyway, I hope you all enjoy this issue of the Omen. It's the Houdini Issue. If you don't understand why yet, wait until you get to the last fifteen pages. Thanks for the pictures, Siqi. They're adorable. Never too many.

Things to look out for; we're planning on doing the COLOR ISSUE soon. We'll release more details later but for now, if you just add [color issue] or something similar to the subject line of your submission, we'll hold it until then. Submit all your lovely full-color pictures of JLash!

- B Corfman, Co-Interim Editrix, WJG

# SECTION SPEAK

## *Oz Course Proposal (not really)*

*Submitted by Would Be Royal Historian Grace Willey*

As some of you may know I have a lot of feelings about L. Frank Baum's Oz series, which are silly arcane peices of early 20th century children's literature that are simultaneously really empowering in terms feminism and gender representation but really problematic in terms of racism and colonialist overtones.

If I could teach anything in the world it would be a course on Oz history beginning with the founding of the country by the fairy Queen Lurline. If I could teach anything substantial though, it would be a course on how perceptions of gender, colonialism, and racism in early twentieth century America affect the political history of Oz from the Wizard's take over of the Emerald City to the reunification/forced colonialism under Princess Ozma's reign.

Amongst other articles and essays, the first three books, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, The Marvelous Land of Oz, and Ozma of Oz would be required readings because that's before Baums' writing goes to shit. Optional reading for comparison would be one of the books from after the 1910 hiatus. Three movie adaptations, The Wizard of Oz (1939), Return to Oz (1985), and one of the silent films produced by L. Frank Baum's Oz Film Manufacturing Company would be required viewing as well. Excessive bashing of Gregory McGuire and MGM studio executives need to happen too. It's a ridiculous fantasy of mine and I don't really know where it would go, but it'd be so goddamned fascinating.

Here's where my Omen submission gets less academic because below is just a general list of things I want to explore/discuss from first three books alone:

### **Book 1- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz**

- Colonialist aspects of the Wizard overthrowing the original ruling monarchy in Oz/kidnapping the princess
- How in the process of seeking their heart's desires the main characters (including the female child protagonist) accidentally overthrow three questionable semi-corrupt governments.  
-and in doing so how Dorothy accidentally fulfills the magical destiny that would traditionally be given to Ozma (the usurped).
- The political state of the Emerald City and the Winkie Country when the Tin Woodman and the Scarecrow, both originally from Munchkin Country and instated to rule by the Wizard, are put into power at the end of the first book.
- How not making it "all just a dream" at the end legitimizes the agency of both the child protagonist and the child reader.

### **Book 2 - The Marvelous Land of Oz**

- Tip's feelings about gender in the beginning of the second book.
- Ozma's feelings on gender after the end of the second book.
- Jinjur as a misinformed non-intersectional feminist who believes that abusing men will solve all the government's problems.
- Ozma/Tip's freewill decision to leave Mombi at the beginning of the book affects the entire history of a country (assuming Mombi's enchantment over her property was why Glinda couldn't find anything.)
- Jack and Ozma's child/parent relationship over the course of the book.
- The reclamation of the Oz government in a post-Wizard period by the people of Oz.
- Ozma outlawing illegal magics not to keep magical types from doing "cool magic tricks that are actually pretty helpful" (as it seems to be reduced to in other books), but to protect those negatively affected by magic as she was as a child.



## SUB-SECTION GLINDA

- Glinda as the extremely informed intersectional feminist who's like, "That's a terrible idea" and instating the originally overthrown trans princess as the ruler of Oz.

- Glinda Glinda Glinda

- Glinda as the unspoken hero.

- Glinda as the morally

ambiguous sorceress with her own motivations for not stepping in during the Wizard's take over but pulling the strings to install Ozma as the ruler after the Wizard's overthrow.

- Alternately, Glinda being banished to the Quadling country during the Wizard's take over and why she doesn't step in even after the Scarecrow is put into power.

- Because I want to know why she has a big ass army given the fact that she's so flipping powerful. There's something going on there.

- Basically let's talk about the unspoken misogynistic assumptions about presentations of frothy pink dresses and fairy wings in classic cinema and take those away.

- Let's talk about how in the process of adapting of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz into the 1939 film, the decision to combine two powerful female characters into one vaguely powerful character created the biggest plot hole in cinematic history. Let's talk about how

one vaguely powerful character created the biggest plot hole in cinematic history. Let's talk about how said plot hole depletes the agency of one of the most power female figures in early twentieth century children's literature in the eyes of the mainstream culture consuming population.

-Let's just look at Glinda as she is written in the books and all she does or could represent.



Look at Glinda riding the Saw-Horse into battle. Why can't we focus more on her? She's great. And terrifying.



### Book 3

- Bill (and I will refer to the chicken as such) and their feelings/ambivalence towards gender.
- Dorothy misgendering Bill at the beginning of the book/enforcing gender roles onto Bill after the fight with the rooster. That's a little important. I want to know if and how Dorothy changes her attitude/if her relationship with Ozma affects this.
- Colonialist overtones of Dorothy capturing the Wheeler. That was weird and also it's the seedling for the heavy colonialist overtones present in Baum's later Oz books. (Dorothy's kinda problematic in this book.)
- Negative portrayals of vanity/artificial beauty, for example the grotesque portrayal of Princess Langwidere's vanity and the comedic portrayals of the Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman's in later books and how these situations are treated in contrast to characters such as Ozma and Glinda who are praised for their "natural beauty".
- Not as important as some of the other things but let's talk about Ozma rescuing Dorothy from the tower. (Can we? Can we just for two seconds? It's my favorite part.)
- Roquat as a representation of strict patriarchal power trying to claim all of Earth's natural resources as his own.

-This in mind all that the constant power conflicts between Ozma, trans feminist probably lesbian Queen of prosperity, and Roquat, as described above, then represent.

-Roquat's motivations for aiding the late King of Ev in his quest for eternal life.

- Ozma rescuing the royal family of Ev, specifically the Queen Mother and the her children/parallels between Ozma's situation with Mombi and the royal family's relationship with Roquat.
- Feeling the Queen of Ev and her children have about the late king selling them off. I feel like that's important. How does this affect their political decisions?
- How do the events of Ozma's early childhood affect her decisions as a ruler?

Anyway. There's my feelings. Thank you for reading them. I did for three hours instead of homework.

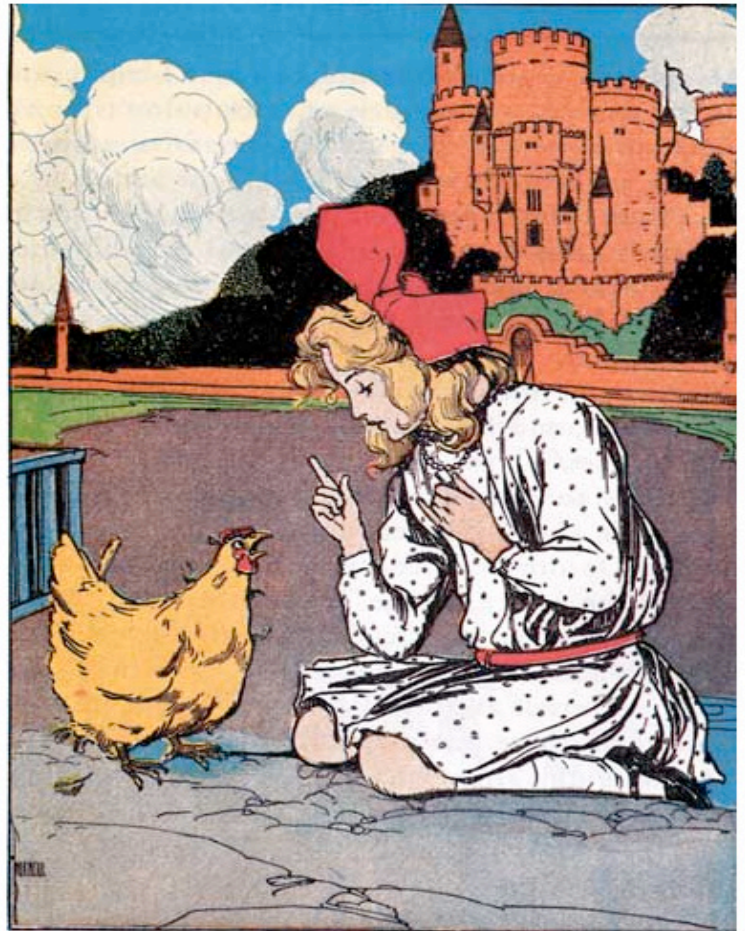


Figure 1: Dorothy Misgenders a Chicken





Figure 2: Jinjur's feminism is not the feminism that you need...

...but it is the feminism you sort of want.





# The Problem of Lexical Replacement

Submitted by Jess Ide

Let's talk about Lexical Replacement in the context of social justice. This article is for everyone, not just linguists or social justice educators, because lexical replacement is definitely a thing that you do and reading this article should help you become conscious of when you're doing it and when it's problematic.

*What is Lexical Replacement?*

Lexical Replacement is when someone replaces the lexical *form* of a word while retaining the same *function*. An example being when someone learns that saying "The Web" will make them sound silly and out of touch, so they simply replace all instances of "The Web" in their speech with "The Internet" while still saying the same thing.

*What are lexical form and function?*

There are many ways to say the same thing. Each way carries its own nuances and associations. "The Web" and "The Internet" are two different *forms* with their own associations and nuances, but they accomplish the same *function* in a sentence, that is, to refer to the same interconnected web of computer servers. "Clifford The Big Red Dog" as a lexical item has both a different *form* and a different *function* from "The Internet". That is, it is referring to the children's cartoon character who is a large red dog, not the interconnected web of computers. Depending on the context, I could also be referring to the name of the television show which stars the character Clifford, this would be an instance of the *same form*, fulfilling a *different function*. It's not just words which have various forms and functions, this also applies to sentences, paragraphs, speech acts, etc.

*Lexical Replacement In the Context of Social Justice*

Often times when someone is called out on saying something problematic, they assume that the problem was not the *function* of their sentence but the *form* of the words they used. "I couldn't have said anything harmful," they think, "it must just be that there's another preferred way of saying it." Sometimes this is true. For instance, if you said "Hampshire doesn't have as many colored people as UMass" you might be corrected and told that the preferred form is "people of color" rather than "colored people", because of the history, nuances, connotations, and associations with the different forms. But the function of saying that UMass is more racially diverse than Hampshire isn't problematic, it's just how it was said. Other times, however, this is not the case, and someone will just use more nuanced words to fulfill the same problematic function.

Let's run through a scenario. Someone says "I saw a really cute boy in a dress the other day." Someone else asks "do you know this person?" and the original speaker says that no, this person is a stranger. The original speaker is told that what they said is problematic, because the person they saw wasn't necessarily a boy and so the original speaker may have been misgendering a stranger. This isn't the biggest crime but it's easy enough to correct and makes a big difference.

The original speaker, rather than hearing that the *function* of assuming the genders of strangers from how they look is problematic, instead replaces all instances of "boy" and "man" in their lexicon with "male-bodied" or some other term. They have changed out the *form* but not the *function*, and what they're saying is still problematic for all the same reasons. They learned that they *said* something problematic but not that they *did* something problematic.

A major motivation behind why people do lexical replacement in these contexts is because it

allows them to avoid questioning their worldview and the ways that they live their lives from day to day. Cis people are often dying to learn what language they can use that will allow them to continue assuming the genders of strangers based on how they look and forcing them back into the cissexist dyadic categories that they're used to, without trans people calling them transphobic and cissexist for doing it. Of course there is no firm that they can use to get around it. The only way for them to not be cissexist and transphobic in this context is if they don't assume the genders of strangers, ask strangers for pronouns before referring to them with gendered pronouns, and don't try to sort everyone they see into one of two dyadic categories.

This of course applies to every other social justice context. When you're called out, try not to think about what you said but what you did. When you're calling someone out, try to direct attention to actions rather than words. Be conscious of lexical replacement and try to make sure you're actually thinking about how systems of oppression are pervasive parts of our culture, rather than just reducing things to different lexical forms. And don't get caught in the trap of saying the same offensive and harmful things as you would before, just in ridiculously complicated and obtuse ways. It's okay to say man and woman, and black and white, just say them in sentences wherein the function isn't perpetuating oppressive systems.

## Haiku to CoordBoard

Where are the results  
of last Town Meeting voting?  
I am not surprised.  
- Xavier A. Torres de Janon

Submitted by Grace Willey:  
Hello yes please submit this photo of the  
OTP you never knew you had V



# WHY I DUDE-BRO HIPPIES

- \* They are soooo fucking hot that it burns your eyes just to look at them
  - \* They are soooo deep because they fucking know everything about philosophy & art
  - \* You get a stoner or in some way <sup>are</sup> sexually aroused when you fucking hear them slur "babe", "chick" in your ears.
  - \* They listen to indie rock and act like they don't care about the billboard 100 while they're grinding against some "girl" listening to tacky pop.
  - \* Best of all, they are so smart that they can fucking care and talk about social justice like they give a damn.
- XO XO, Sigi Lu.

# Section: lies

## The Dance of Lonely Fear

by Alex de Strulle

I fear many things,  
The beating of angry bird's wings.  
The sounds of large machines.  
My own reflection staring back at me.

But perhaps my biggest fear  
Lies in my greatest pleasures.  
The sound of a friend's laughter,  
The feeling of a warm embrace.  
You face outlined in an aura of tenderness.

How could I possibly deserve such things?  
How could you stand to give them to me?  
Beneath the rational understanding of a sound mind  
Lies the sickness of self-hatred.  
You told me you'd never abandon me,  
And you have not.

But still I fear for the worst,  
Fear that my fear itself will drive you away  
And infect you with its sickness.  
So I sit here weighing a million options in my mind,  
While smiling the smile of fear.  
Afraid of losing what I hold dear.

Nancy Michaud ->





## More poems by Alex de Strulle

### Cross My Heart, Hope To Fly, Stick This "Poem" In My Eye

I'm not entire sure you will understand,  
Life's complications for a person like me.  
Overall it's a painful experience,  
Violent at times as well.  
Eventually you will understand.  
You will read my "poetry" and  
Oh!  
Understanding!  
Should you do in fact, become aware.  
Octopuses is the word to swear.  
Rhymed just for you.  
Really though I'm just rambling on here.  
You haven't got a clue do you?

### They Dare

How dare they hurt us so!  
How dare they cause us pain,  
So that they may sleep secure  
Upon their beds padded thick  
With power and control.

They feed us lies and deceit,  
Then dine upon our suffering.  
They fill our heads with misery  
And misinformation.  
Until we vomit cold red blood,  
Until we cry toxic waste.  
Until we stab and hurt one another,  
So that we may be invisible to them.

How dare they damn upon us,  
Answers to questions that they insist  
Are necessary, but really, they are not.  
How dare they ask us to answer  
In only yeses or nos.  
When perhaps all that we want to say,  
Is maybe or  
I don't know.



Am I confused?  
I suppose I am.  
My world's confused.  
My life is confused.  
And time is lost.

People are the most confusing.  
Layers and layers of mysteries,  
Begging for me to examine,  
Mocking me as I have failed to see.

I feel a great shame in me.  
Shamed for my worries and my fears.  
Shamed for my own ignorance  
And my own misunderstandings.

Do people even see me as me?  
Am I nothing but a child?  
Am I nothing but an egg?  
Cold and alone in a big bad world?

Is pity the emotion that people feel for me?  
Is fear the emotion that drives them away?  
Am I destined to live life trapped inside a  
bubble?  
Where true human compassion is but a  
dream?

I want my bubble to be burst.  
I want the pain to stop and  
My friends should all be there for me.  
My life is a shallow trade,  
Better health for worse relations.

Let me be free.





## Not a Perfect Person but a Good Friend

A story of Steve Rogers with Sensory Processing Disorder

### Chapter One

by B Corfman

The sun was still half an hour from rising, but Steve was outside. He'd taken to leaving his apartment as early as he could convince himself was reasonable; he usually couldn't sleep anyway. And the regular pounding of his feet on the pavement was calming. He was in control of it, at least.

He was supposed to be used to this body by now; that's what everybody seemed to think. But it was too much, sometimes. During the war he'd at least had something to focus on and distract him, and a sense of purpose.

Steve stopped after rounding the next corner. The wind was loud, and it rustled the leaves, sending little sparks into his head. When it was this quiet, even the small sounds could be deafening. That was why he'd been running. But the sky was starting to lighten, and he wanted to look at the leaves before it got too bright.

Right now they were particularly stunning; fall was starting, and red and orange leaves were mixed in with green.

THUD, THUD, THUD

Steve flinched and turned around, flinging his hands up onto the side of his face. Static; but it helped, a little. Someone else was running here, too.

"Hey! Didn't th-" \*BZZT\*

"-yone else this-"

\*BZZT\* "-y"

Was he being talked to? The leaves and wind had been bad enough, but the shouting in this otherwise quiet morning was making his ears buzz.

THUD, THUD, THUD



## Chapter Two

Steve hugged his shoulders tightly and scrunched up his eyes. It was getting brighter, and the noise made it brighter still.

"-right?"

The voice was right next to him now. He ran.

Sam blinked as the man ran off. Captain America?

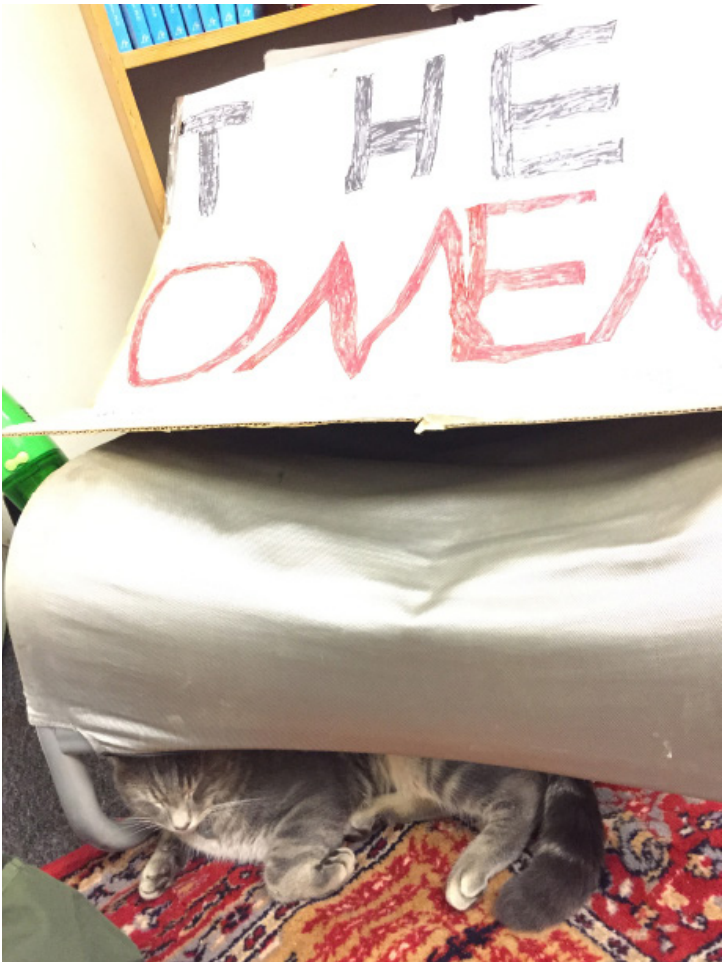
"Well, these laps aren't going to run themselves," he muttered, and continued circling the reflecting pool.

Steve arrived back at his apartment shortly after sunrise, arm held up in front of his eyes to block out the light. He guided himself up the staircase, gripping the banister. The smooth wood felt good under his hands, and the regular interval of creases where the pieces were glued together helped him reorient. By the time he reached the top of the stairs, he could remove his arm long enough to find his door and get inside.

His room was small, and normally that bothered Steve, but today it wasn't small enough. He crawled into bed and wrapped himself in his blanket. He thought about removing his clothes. Did he want to be looking at this body right now? But they were rubbing against his skin and it was getting worse.

He kicked the blanket and his shoes and socks off, and laid on his back, trying to regulate his breathing. The pants needed to go, too. And the shirt. He looked down; he wished he hadn't. It was dark in here, as he usually kept the blinds drawn, but he could still see the body – he could still see how different it was from his body. Steve covered himself with the blanket again, wrapping it tightly. He needed to not feel so big. He needed to feel like he existed in the world. But no matter how close he pulled the blanket, he kept expanding – filling the room, filling the world, until he ceased to exist as a person. He rolled around on the bed.

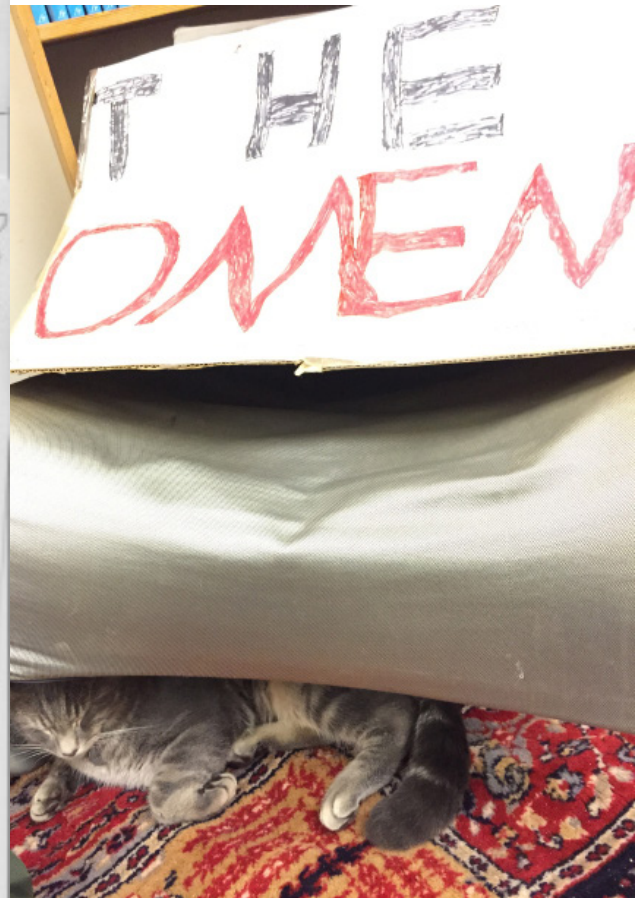
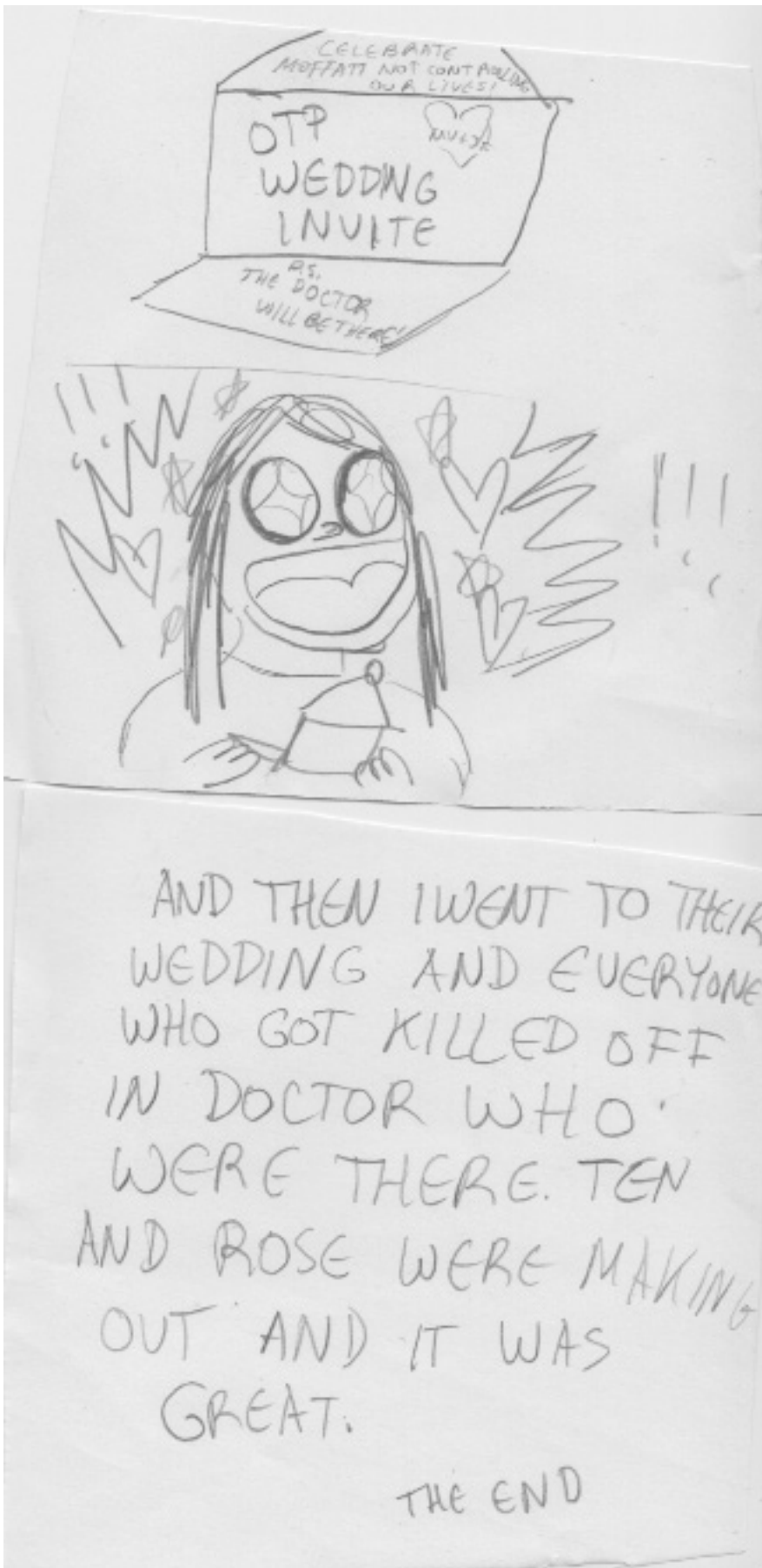
It helped.



EXCERPTS FROM A  
BANGIN' DREAM  
COMIC

I MADE INSTEAD OF  
HW





# Section Hate



^submitted by Jess Ide

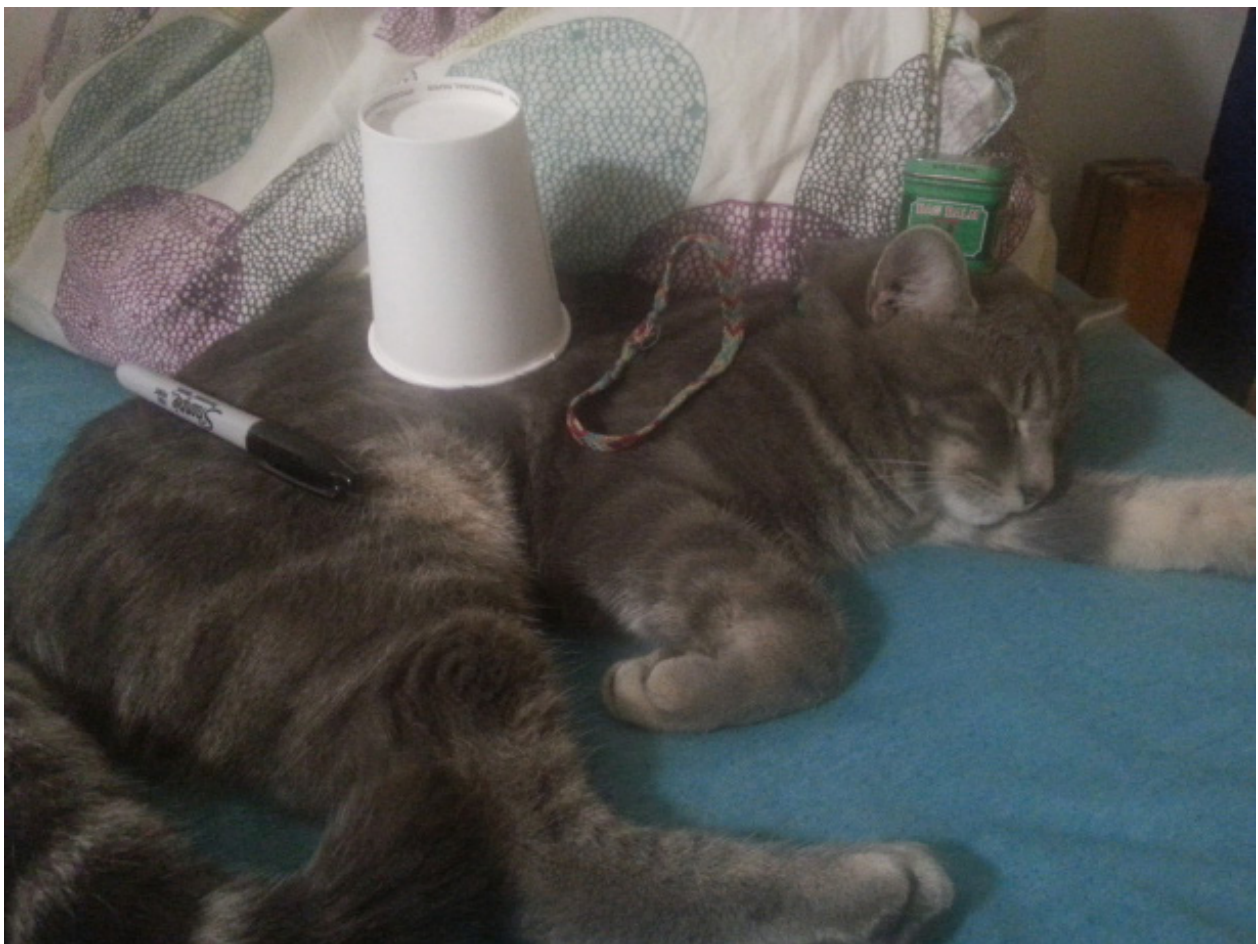




^Submitted by Jonathan Gardner

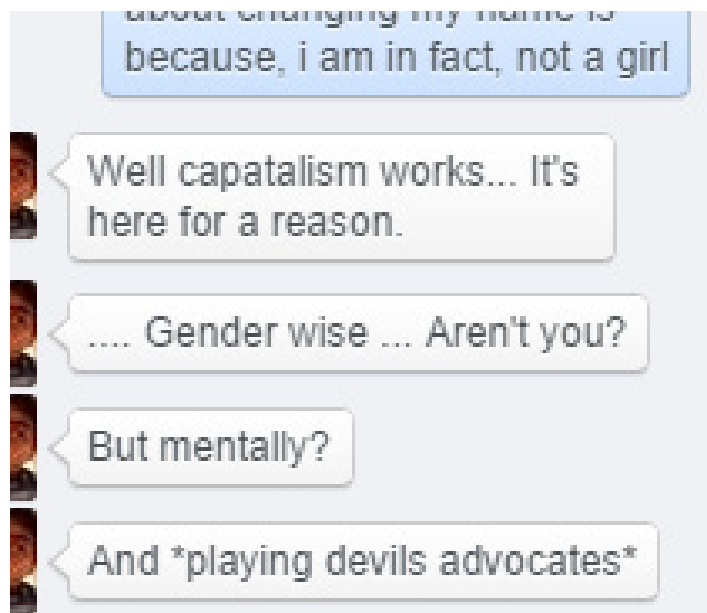


Submitted by Nora Miller vvv





^Submitted by Jess Ide



^Submitted by Mika Holbrook v



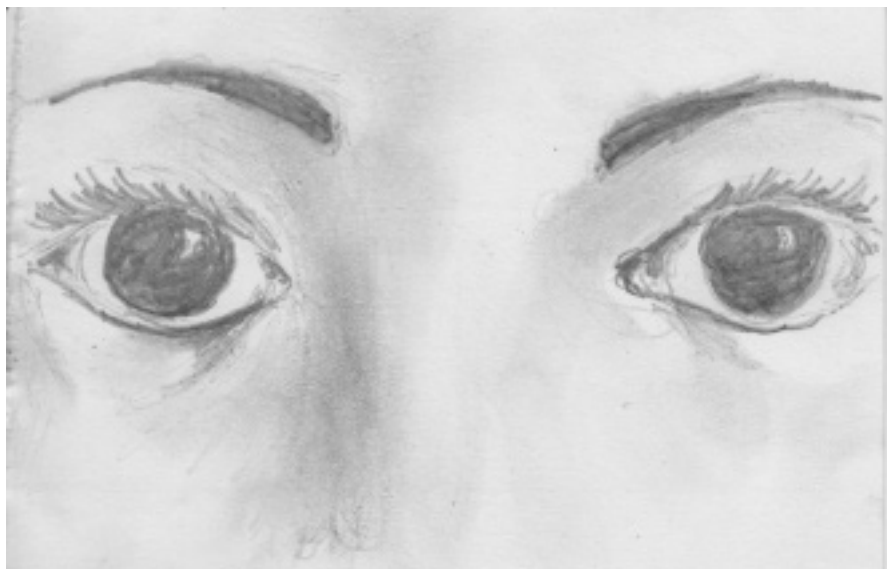


### **A Suggestion for HYPE** *by Jess Ide*

Everyone reading this who has access to a computer, head to <http://i.puhtml.com/tinysubversions/oscillations> and listen to it. This cool hip beat is computer generated based on an algorithm to make pleasing danceable oscillations. It will go on forever so long as you keep the tab open and it will never get boring.

So I suggest that, in light of HYPE's recent budget cuts, we can save even more money on Hampshire Halloween by just blasting this web page for 7 hours rather than paying humans to play live music. We can even break it up with Hampshire bands who are willing to play for free anyway. This can be our headliner! Oscillations by Darins Kazerni! ~\*So Avanté Garde!~\*~ and it's not too boss-ey so it's not as ableist! Everybody wins!





<- Submitted by Mekdes Cavallaro



Submitted by Grave Willey ->





# YORICK, MY SKELETON BOYFRIEND

-----  
A *millie* Romance  
to the tune  
of the Popular sheet  
music "Lydia the  
Tattooed Lady"

I SPEND A LOT OF TIME  
AT THE GRAVEYARD IN  
OCTOBER.



CAUSE EVERY YEAR  
-♥ ON HALLOWEEN,  
I HAVE A DATE,  
WHO REALLY IS A  
SCREAM

THE MOST GLORIOUS  
CREATURE,  
UNDER THE  
MOON...

NOT LIKE



DRACULA



THE WOLFMAN

FUCK  
IT  
I HAVE  
MIDTERMS

SO DON'T  
THINK ME  
A LOON...

- Grace

OR MOTHRA!



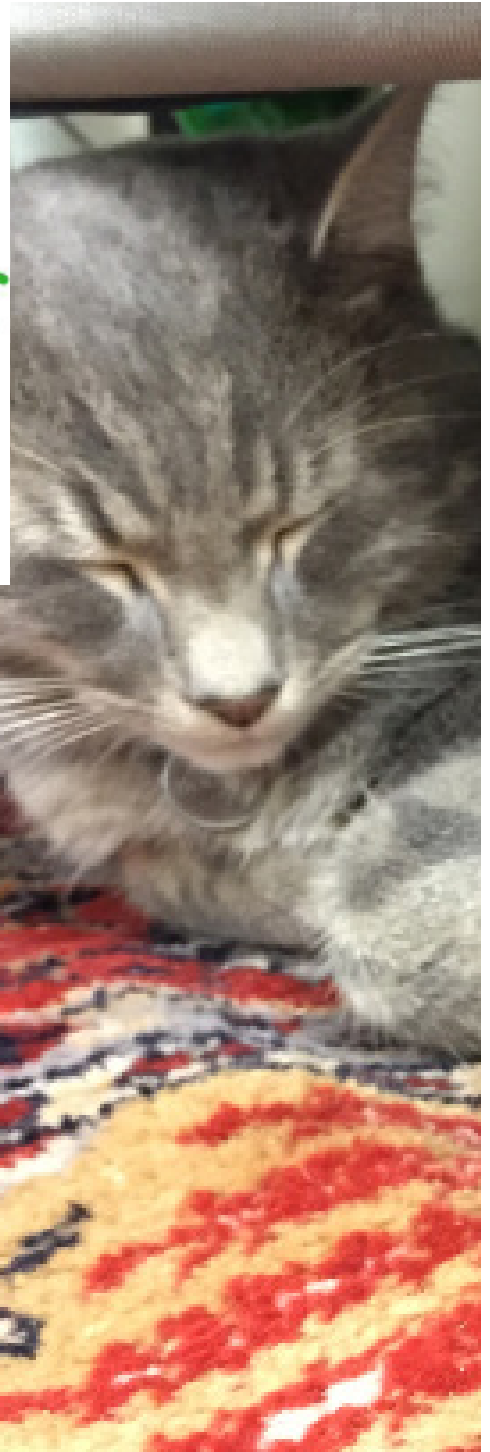
<- Submitted by B Corfman

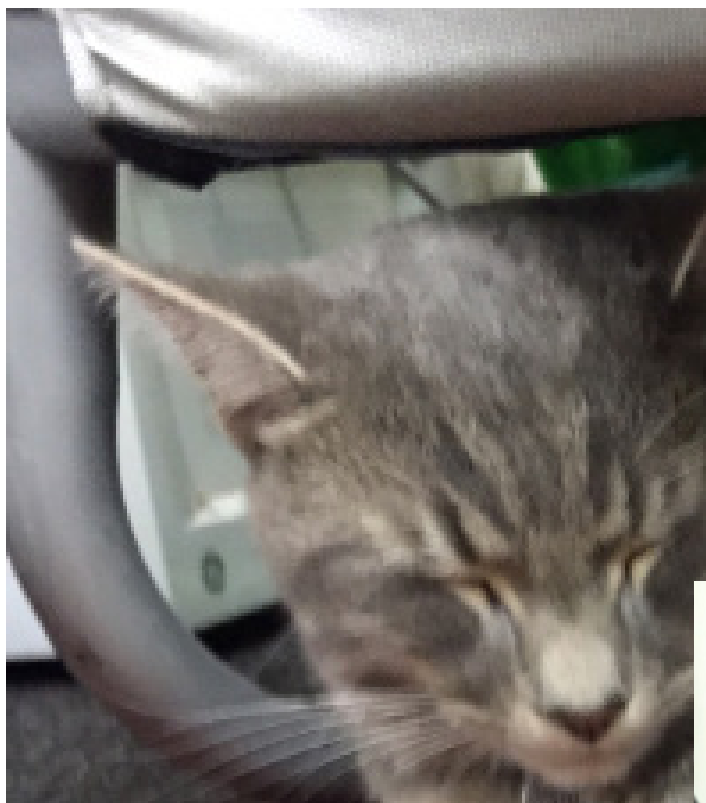






^B Corfman

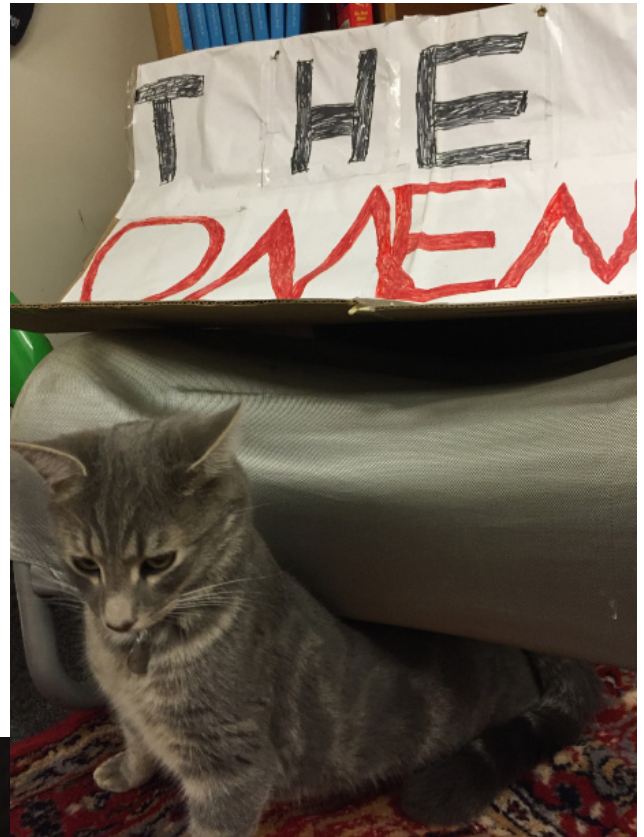




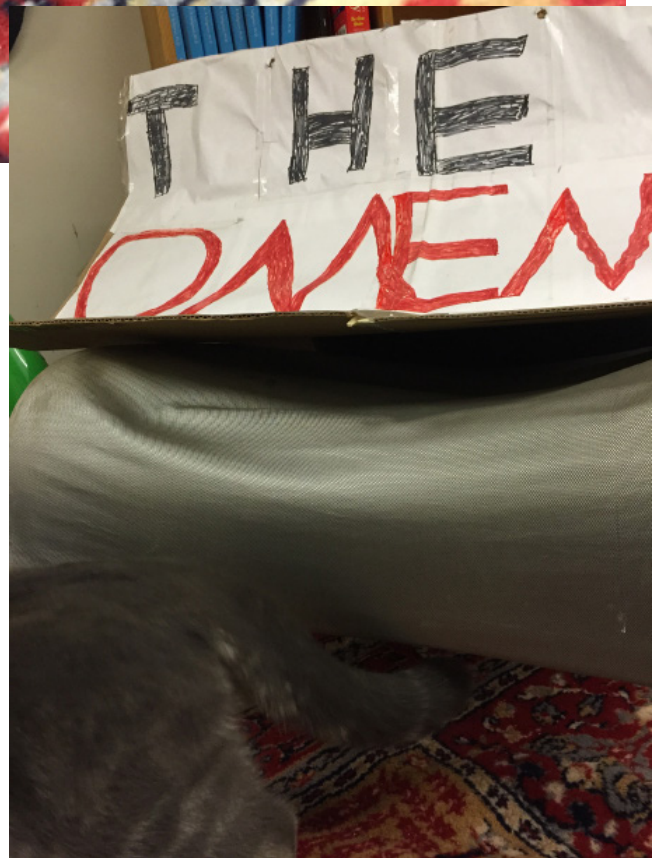
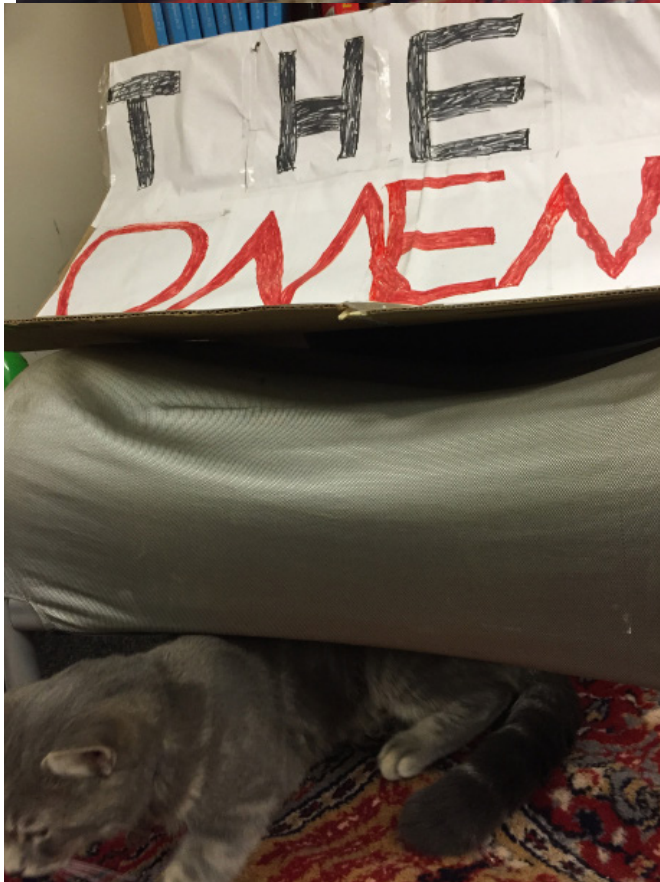








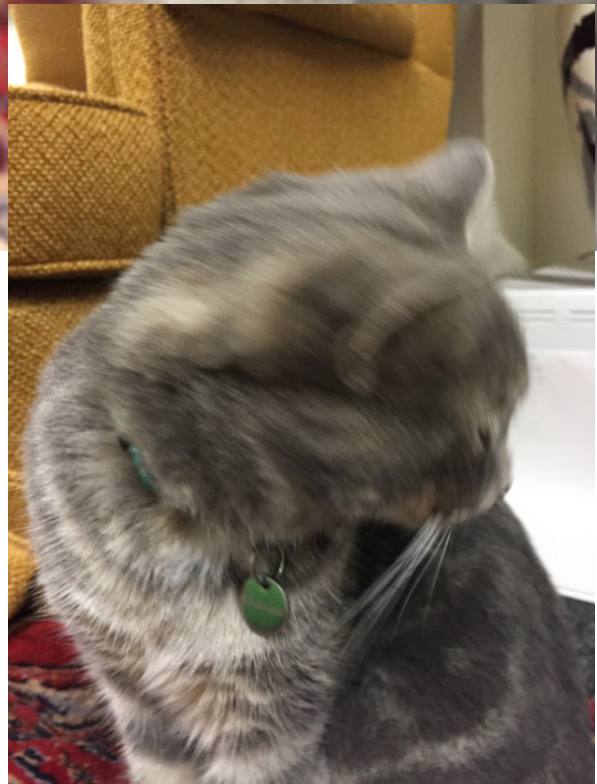












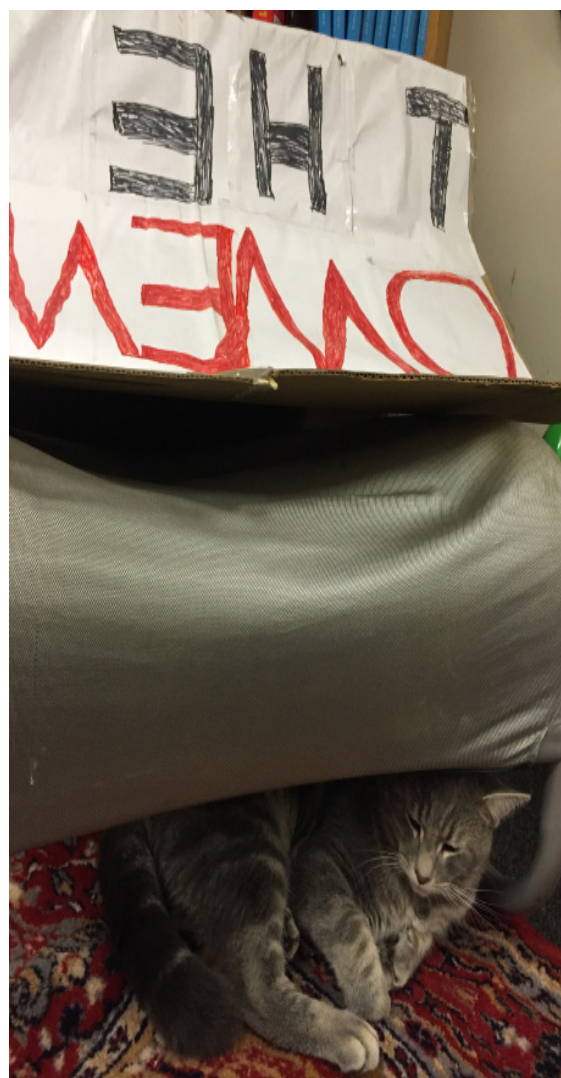
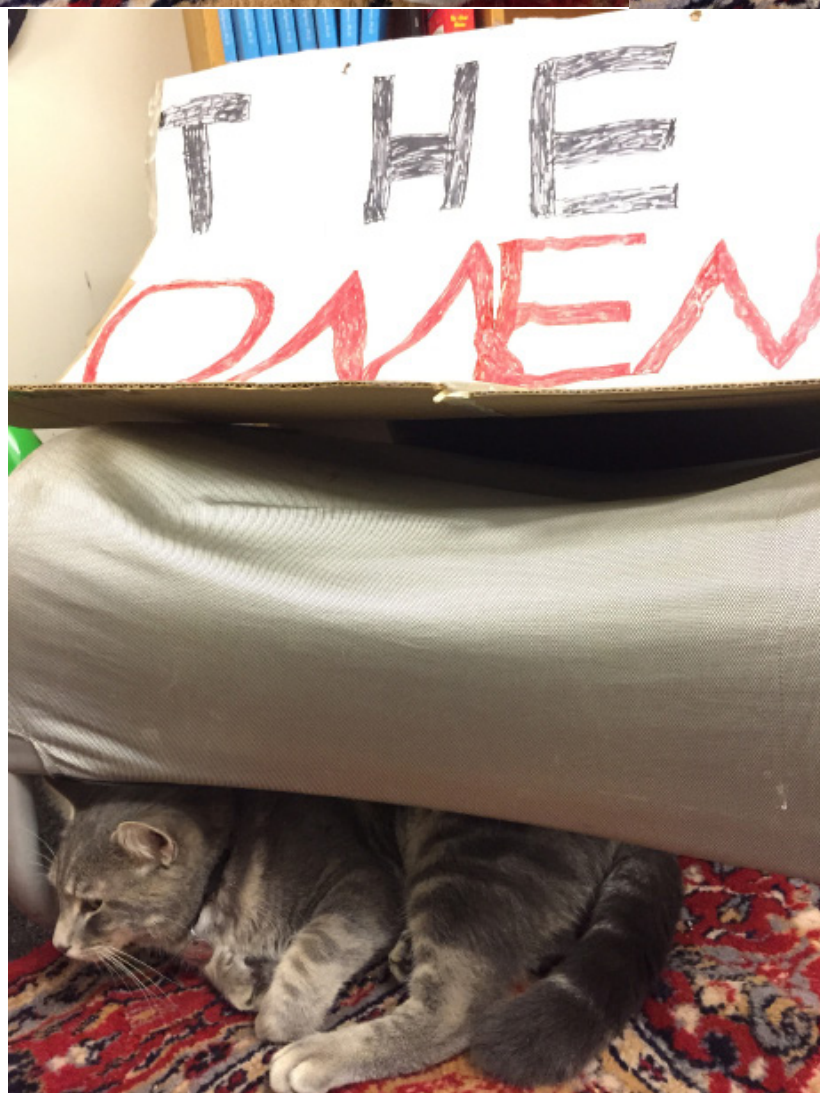








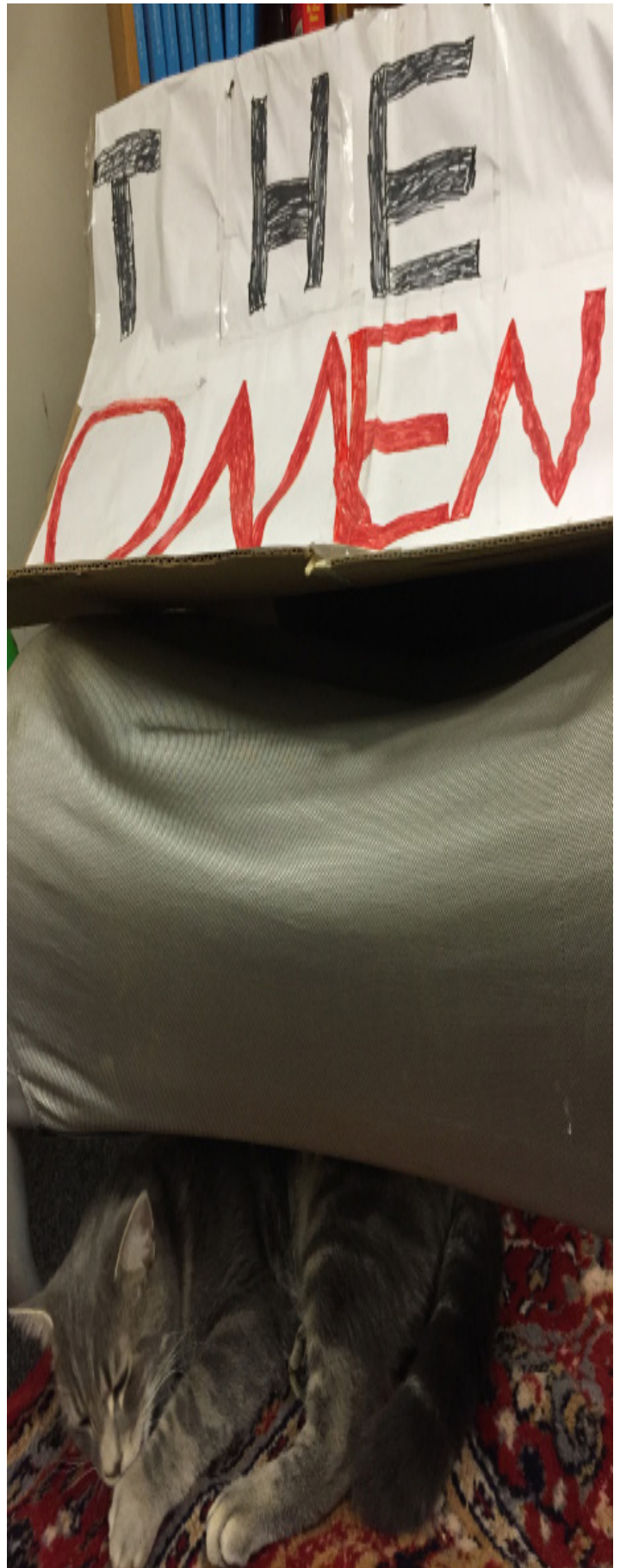
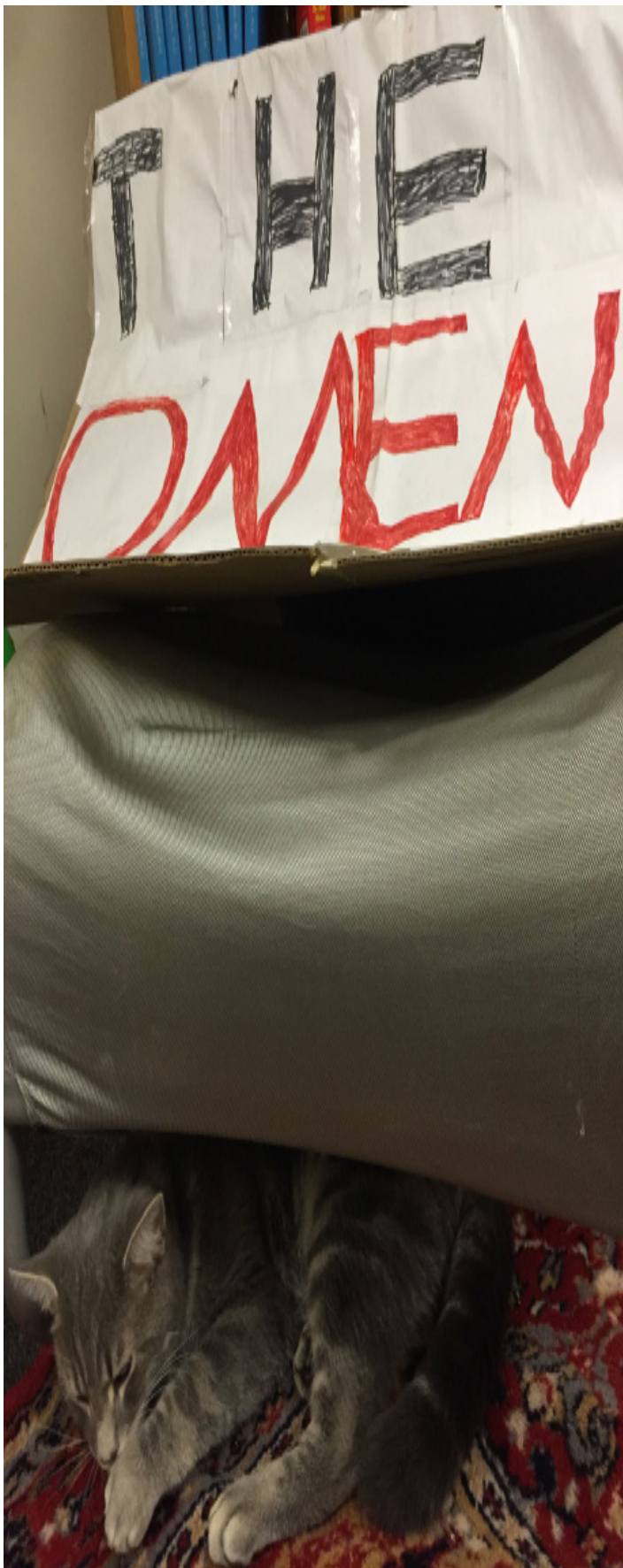




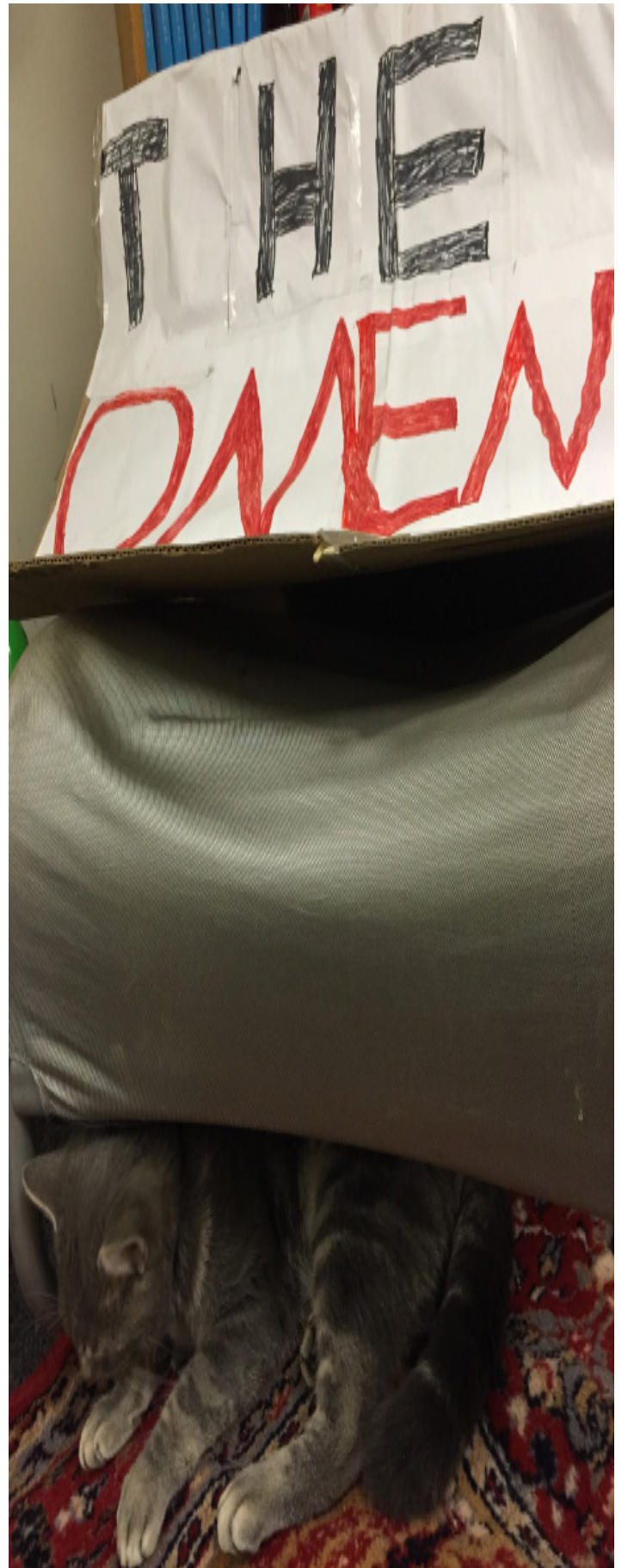
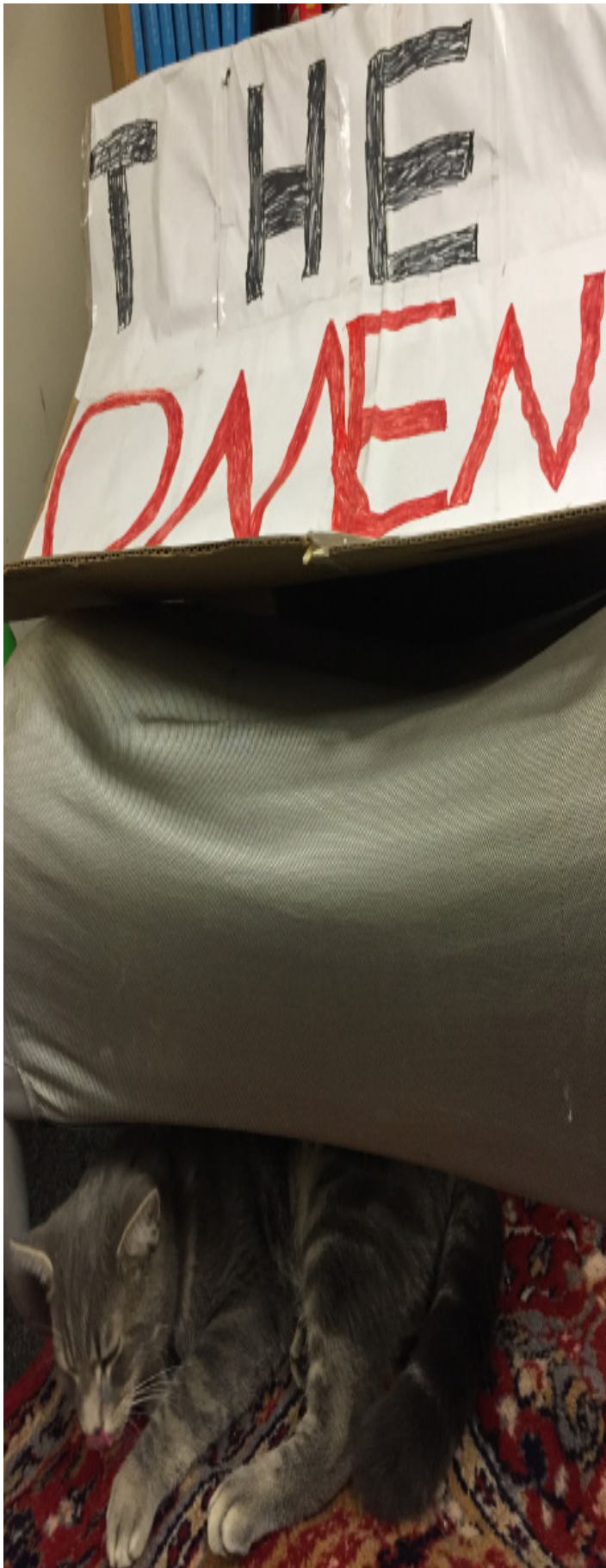














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